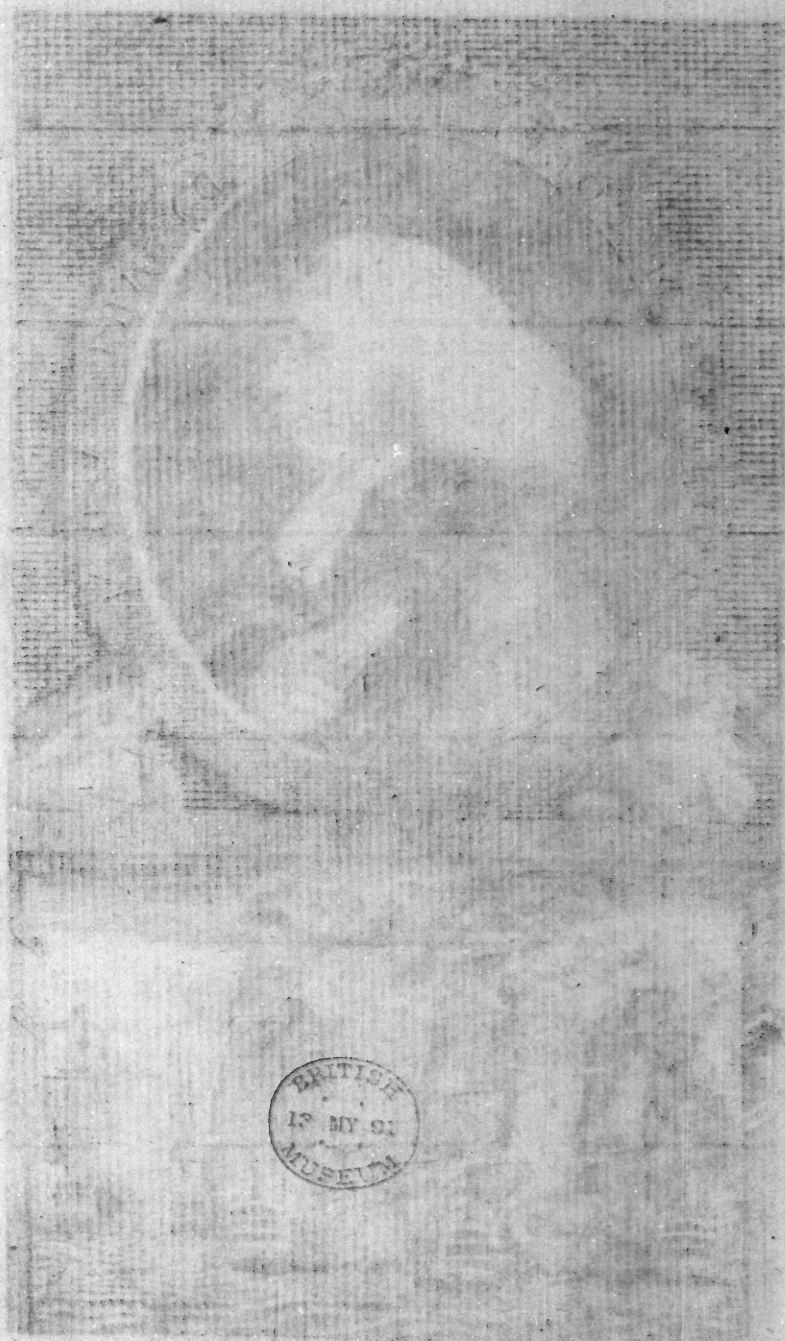


A
HEROIC POEM,
IN
THREE CANTOS.





BRITISH
MUSEUM
18 01 91



13.

THE DOWNFALL OF THE
ROMAN CONFEDERACY;
OR,
THE EVER MEMORABLE

12th OF APRIL 1782.

A HEROIC POEM,
IN THREE CANTOS.

By the Rev. Mr COLVILL of Dyfart, V. D. M.

Fortunati VIRI! Si quid mea carmina possunt,
Nulla Dies unquam memori Vos Eximet ævo:
Dum Domus AUGUSTI ANGLICANIS IMMOBILEM Turrin
Accolet, Imperiūque Pater BRITANNUS habebit.

Vide Virg. Æ. 9. l. 446.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM DARLING,
AND SOLD BY ALL THE BOOKSELLERS.
MDCCLXXXVIII.

*Entered in STATIONERS HALL,
According to Act of Parliament.*



TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
FREDERICK,
DUKE OF YORK AND ALBANY,
PRINCE BISHOP OF OSNABRUCK, &c. &c.
THE FOLLOWING CANTOS
COMPOSED ON THE DOWNFALL
OF THE ROMAN CONFEDERACY,
BY THE MOST GALLANT AND VICTORIOUS
LORD RODNEY,
ON THE EVER MEMORABLE
12th OF APRIL 1782,
ARE, WITH ALL DUTIFUL RESPECT AND ADMIRATION
OF HIS MANY PRINCELY VIRTUES,
MOST HUMBLY INSCRIBED
BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S MOST OBEDIENT,
MOST DEVOTED, HUMBLE SERVANT,
R. COLVILL.

CANAL
FREDERICK

DUKE OF YORK AND ALBANY

PRINCE BISHOP OF OXFORD

THE FOLLOWING CANALS

WAS THE FIRST OF THE CANALS

OF THE CANALS

BY THE MOST GALLANT AND VICTORIOUS

WILLIAM OF ORANGE

ON THE 11TH OF MAY 1672

1672

AND WITH ALL BUT ONE A ROCK AND NO TATION

OF THE MANY DIFFICULTIES

OF THE CANALS

BY THE MOST GALLANT AND VICTORIOUS

WILLIAM OF ORANGE

1672

CANTO FIRST,

MOST HUMBL Y INSCRIBED

T O

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF RUTLAND.

*Duris ut ilex tonsa bipennibus
Nigræ feraci frondes in Alcido
Per damna, per cædes, ab ipso
Ducit opes animumque ferro.*

Hor. in Druf.

DESCEND dread goddess of the fearless eye!
Whether with flaming Seraphim on high,
You lead th' inexpressive choral song,
On golden harps, amid the victor throng,
Of winged Saints, who doff their glitt'ring crowns,
Of amaranth, before the sapphire thrones:
Meet notes of praise and songs of triumph sing
To th' God of Battles, HEAVEN'S ALMIGHTY KING.

A

Or

Or hov'ring o'er the FANE more sacred made,
 By him from BOSWORTH's bloody fields you shade 10
 The HEROES SHRINES: Thy HOWARD's* deathless fame,
 Thy SEYMOUR's, DRAKE's, thy RHALEIGH's bold to tame, }
 Fell Antichrist enchain'd in sulph'rous flame;
 When vast Armada by the free and brave,
 In fiery tempest found'er'd on the wave. 15

'Twas you who fir'd their souls, who swell'd the storm
 Of thund'ring battle, when thy sons deform
 With fire and carnage 'mid the burning tide;
 Thy HAWKE†, thy RUSSEL‡, crush'd the Dragon's pride.

Come

* Lord Charles Howard, Lord Henry Seymour, and the bold Admirals Drake, Rhaleigh, Frobisher, and Hawkins, have made their names immortal, by completing the destruction of the Spanish Armada, when Philip invaded England in 1588.

† The gallant Lord Hawke overthrew M. Conflans, who had sailed from Brest to cover the then intended invasion in November 1759.

‡ It was in the famous battle 1682, that the ever renowned Admiral Ruffel defeated Tourville, with a mighty fleet and army ready to embark

to

Come from their laurel'd TOMBS, and deck thy crown 20
 With wreaths of British oak in honour of thy SON :
 Thy favourite SON * demands the victor song,
 Which pealing fleets and shouting hosts prolong :

Whilst

to invade England. He then burnt the RISING SUN of FRANCE, with other capital ships, and put an end to all endeavours of the House of Bourbon to replace on the throne of England the most unfortunate James the VII.

** The following verses brought on the Author great reflections from many merchants and others, traders to St. Eustatius.*

Hail, RODNEY ! thrice with naval triumph crown'd,
 While Spain, Batavia, mourn thy thunders roar,
 And haughty France, transfix'd with mortal wound,
 Bows her proud sails, and dyes the seas with gore.

For Thee, with trophies of immortal fame,
 Thy country decorates the arch of praise ;
 With darling sons enrolls thy deathless name,
 Example ! glory ! boast of future days !

Long shall the Muses sing in peaceful quire
 The Hero, He ! turning with effort great
 The storm of war : 'mid thunder, death, and fire,
 Resolv'd to fall, or stem the tides of fate.

And

Whilst glorying in his might, our BRITISH JOVE,
 Who flings the volley'd light'ning from above, 25
 'Mid the thick gloom serene, and sends the free
 And brave to humble grasping tyranny,

More

And herald fame on angel trumpet blow
 Hesperian Isles redeem'd! the subject main
 Circling her empire! while the vanquish'd foe
 Mourn their proud league and pomp of war as vain.

While Envy fell with clam'rous Faction fled,
 Foul Harpies they! to blast thy flow'ring fame,
 In Hell's deep gloom shall hide the guilty head
 Before the triumph of thy loud acclaim.

And Britain hath, with a mother's joy and glory in her *heroic son*, recorded in her annals, in letters of gold, what will be read with peculiar exultation by the brave and free to latest ages, That, on the ever memorable 12th of April 1782, the most active and intrepid Lord Rodney, at a time when the British empire was brought into the most eminent danger, by the wicked combination of many powerful Princes, headed by the ambitious House of Bourbon, most successfully encountered the numerous fleets of France, with all their army on board, conducting by Count de Grasse, to join the Spanish armament, in order to complete the conquest of the West India Islands, and invade the empire where most accessible.

The

More proudly fills his throne: The ALBION QUEEN
 A sparkling STAR begilds the solemn scene,
 Charming the gloom, with smiles of Love and Peace: 30
 Her golden Sceptre bids the tempest cease;
 Hoarse winds and waves: while Bourbon's trembling shore,
 And shrinking navies own BRITANNIA'S pow'r.

And

The gallant Briton, fired with the public cause, fell upon the enemy's fleet with a spirit, skill, and fury unknown before, and spread terror, death, and carnage through every ship. With irresistible ardour, he continued this most bloody and decisive battle a whole day, till night closed upon the dreadful scene. The very flower and strength of the French navy were sunk, taken, or effectually destroyed. The undaunted Count de Grasse, who did all that man could do to prevent this fatal catastrophe, with his few surviving officers, fighting it out bravely to the last, was taken in the famous Ville de Paris, a most capital ship, which was the glory and boast of the French nation.

Thus the irresistible spirit and undaunted bravery of one Great Man gave a mortal blow for ever to this proud and alarming confederacy; turned the scales of a most disastrous and expensive war on the side of Britain, against all her numerous and vaunting enemies; and, under the direction of Divine Providence, which ordains the rise and the fall of nations, saved, by a most signal and complete victory, the British empire, when pushed to the very verge of destruction.

And THOU! Sweet Beam of RUTLAND's Princely Line!
 In whom concentrating all their Splendors shine: 35
 As some new planet streams his orient light,
 Fair sparkling on the raven brow of night;
 Reft of that SUN, who in exalted sphere,
 Shone REGENT to conduct thy JOCUND YEAR;

The successful manœuvres of one skilful, active, and undaunted Admiral, whose soul was proof against every consideration, gave the LOVE OF HIS KING AND COUNTRY, established again, in the estimation of the world, the declining character of the British nation, maintained with splendour the empire of the seas, and diffused peace and tranquillity over all Europe.

It will not be forgotten, that, in 1778, Lord Rodney defeated the Spanish fleet under the brave Don Langara, who, with his Rear-Admiral, and several ships of the line, fell into his hands. He also reduced St Eustatia, where several millions in specie and merchandise were taken. The Dutch fleet richly laden, were also captured; and their Admiral, fighting bravely, was killed.

Such heroic actions render Lord Rodney the most distinguished naval character of the times; and reflect a lustre round the Hero, which neither fortune nor nobility, nor the most flattering exertions of panegyric can bestow; and which no clouds raised by Malice, Envy, and Party, by Outlaws and abandoned Traitors to their country, with all their impotent attempts, shall ever be able to tarnish or eclipse to latest ages.

In

In whose bright Orb prime Honour built her bow'r, 40
 And Worth gave lustre beyond wealth or pow'r;
 Embosom'd in thy CYNTHIA's trembling Ray,
 Begild thy Crescent with ethereal day;
 According with the Nine Harmonious Lyres,
 Roll on thy course amid Congenial Fires: 45
 Smile on sequester'd Muse! thy Beams beguile
 Rude storms of life, with sweet propitious smile;
 A stranger hails thy Princely Worth; the STAR
 Of RUTLAND shines to cheer the wretch afar;
 While to the PATRIOT's TOMB, he ever bears 50
 Fresh flowrets wat'ed with the *Muses* tears.

Hark! Bourbon cries, the mighty league is seal'd,
 Which nor by Fate herself can be repeal'd:
 Stamp'd on the roll of destiny is come,
 The day which fixes haughty BRITAIN's doom. 55
 Lo! Mars thy brazen clarion sounds afar!
 The blood stain'd courfers bear thy mad'ning car

Thro'

Thro' hills of carnage : How with horror quakes
 Each haughty Islander, while ruin shakes
 To defolation wide; from pole to pole, 60
 The Thrones once Bourbon's ancient fierce controul.

Like an unwealdy column high appears,
 Her state amid the waves; she lordly rears,
 Imperial Crowns and Scepter'd Rule, emboast
 With Trophies 'ere long humbled in the dust. 65

Proud ATALANTA in the Western main,
 By me has burst their SENATE's galling chain.
 My victor Hosts shall crush their EASTERN PRIDE,
 Where Indian Ganges with their blood is dyed.
 HESPERIAN ISLES with treasur'd spoils afar, 70
 This arm shall seize the SINEWS of their war:
 While mighty SPAIN, by boastful league ally'd,
 Her western seas shall with Armada hide;
 And staunch BATAVIA rousing at my call,
 With Parricide and Treason fix their fall. 75

The

The North and South still rivals to divide
 BRITANNIA's spoils, all combat on our side.
 This arm alone could circumscribe their Reign:
 How shall our league their Dragon pride enchain!
 Ye numerous hosts! unknown in fight to yield; 80
 For Cressley, Agincourt, and Blenheim's field,
 Take vengeance now; and for the Danube's Flood,
 Swim your proud courfers in their richest blood.

Heroes of France! to you her Princes call,
 Expunge in blood, the hapless Tourville's fall, 85
 And Conflans Thine! be Calpes tow'ring steep,
 And Lago's shame remember'd on the deep.
 The haughty Islanders shall soon deplore,
 Their Empire shaken to wild Orca's Shore.
 My arm of strength the conflict shall decide; 90
 The ax shall tame their SENATE's Lordly Pride;
 And pure Religion, with her hallowed fires,
 Shine forth renew'd, and wake her choral choirs.
 The river Dragon by proud inroads gor'd,
 I'll yield AUGUSTA's wealth to fire and sword; 95

Then drive the Line of BRUNSWIC from the Crown,
To rear in GERMANY their frugal Throne.

Here ceas'd the Grand Monarch; his Hosts prepare,
To range their Miriads and commence the war:
To end BRITANNIA's Glory and her Reign, 100
France sounds a fierce defiance on the Main.

Our British GEORGE their pageant boast of pride,
With scorn attends; and, like himself, defy'd.

What Boaster's threat across my native deeps,
Provokes my Thunder which in silence sleeps; 105
Which once arous'd, and at proud Bourbon hurl'd,
Is Heaven's Loud Storm to shake a guilty World.
And are we in the measurement of pride,
Which British valour scans with partial stride,
So fallen, so sunk, that a mere Host of Slaves, 110
Should sound defiance on our native waves :
Should challenge thus those dauntless Sons who tam'd
Fell Antichrist when his Armada flam'd,

And

And scorch'd our English Seas; who at La-Hogue
 And Lagos were o'erthrown: The Hydra dog 115
 Of Erebus, may howl with lengthen'd breath;
 Our English Mastiffs, fierce with Jaws of Death,
 Shall quell the Monster and his bestial train
 Of Craft and Malice vaunting but in vain.

CANTABRIA long bewails the fatal day 120
 She join'd her floating castles in the fray:
 Armada vast again shall sink in woe,
 My Sons of glory strike the dreadful Blow:
 Another Tourville see his Fleets expire,
 Another RISING SUN 'mid smoke and fire: 125
 BATAVIA o'er the deeps her SPICEY SPOIL,
 Behold the treasures of the BRITISH ISLE,
 And ATALANTA from the free and brave,
 Shrink to the Covert of Degraded Slave.

Bold SONS OF FIRE who dare undaunted go, 130
 'Mid death and carnage 'gainst your Country's foe,
 Who brave all dangers: May your fearless might
 For BRITAIN ride triumphant thro' the fight.

Your

Your Country calls! thrice valiant SONS OF WAR!
 Thou HOOD! thou RODNEY! dreaded from afar; 135
 Go pour swift vengeance on the vaunting band
 Of Bourbon spoilers: In your Nervous Hand
 My light'nings brandish, to confound the foe,
 Till Bourbon sink by dreadful overthrow;
 And proud confed'rate KINGDOMS meet their doom: 140
 As light'ning but dispels the tempest gloom;
 And BRITAIN gives the humbled world to know,
 She rises greater from each Foreign Blow.

The SOV'REIGN ceas'd, his SONS of THUNDER guide
 Their pomp of Battle o'er th' Atlantic tide. 145
 Like two black clouds with tempest fraught THEY come,
 Ten thousand Thunders flumb'ring in their womb:
 Increasing Horror takes each BODING EYE,
 Condensing Uproar sweeps along the Sky;
 Till wasteful Devastation rush amain, 150
 In Fiery Deluge from th' etherial Plain.

END OF CANTO FIRST.

CANTO

